(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such amenities have been provided along the National Highways passing through the State of Gujarat; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, by when these amenities are likely to be provided on National Highways in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Central Government has an on-going scheme, both in the Govt. sector and Private Sector, for setting up passenger oriented wayside amenities along National Highways to provide basic facilities like parking areas for cars and buses, drinking water, toilet, snack bar/ restaurants, rest rooms, telephone, first aid and KIOSKS.

(c) and (d) Under the Scheme, of Govt. sector financing, the work of passenger oriented wayside amenities at Wapi on NH. 8 in Gujarat is in progress.

Development of Super Highways

1278. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Super Highway Project has been put on hold due to the lack of funds;

(b) if so, the actual amount of funds required by Government during 1997-98 as compared to 1996-97 indicating the amount so far spent, year-wise on widening of existing roads, conversion of one-lane Express Ways to two-lane and two-lane to four-lane; and

(c) whether Government have allowed private participation in Super Highways; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) The National Highways Authority of India, on behalf of the Central Government, had invited global tenders for carrying out feasibility studies for 35 proposed sections of Super National Highways in the country. However, due to paucity of funds for land acquisition it has not been possible to proceed with the scheme.

(c) Private sector participation is allowed for development and maintenance of the whole or part of a national highway. For this purpose the Central Government may enter into an agreement with a private party and that private party is entitled to collect and retain fees during the period of agreement, at such rate, for services or benefits rendered by it, as the Central Government may specify.

Cargo handling at Kandla Port

1279. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the cargo handling rates are going down steadily at the Kandla Port and the authorities there are unable to cope with the problem due to shortage of resources both human and machine;

(b) if so, the details of ports developed by private entreprenurs around the above port and in other places along the Gujarat coastal lines/areas so far; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve the service of cargo handling at Kandla Port?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Efforts to improve cargo handling service in Kandla Port is a continuing process through creation of new berths, jetties, SBM, mechanised handling facilities, etc., by the Port Trust and through private sector participation.